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BODICE

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# Personalized Bodice Fitting

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Bodices, whether they are attached to a skirt or separate, often require slight adjustment to fit individual body contours. By altering the pattern to coincide with individual figure shapes, a good fit and, in turn, a flattering garment will result.

**Patterns for a dress or top should be chosen by the bust measurement.** If the full bust measurement is 5 cm or more larger than the high bust measurement, use the high bust as the bust measurement to select the pattern size. This means you have a large bust cup and probably will have to adjust for a large bust. If the bust measurement falls between two sizes, select the smaller size pattern.

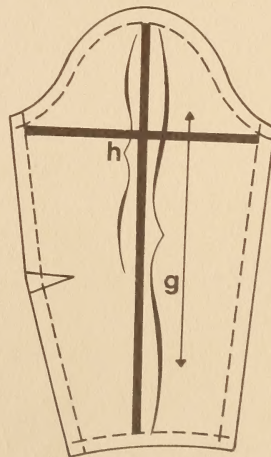
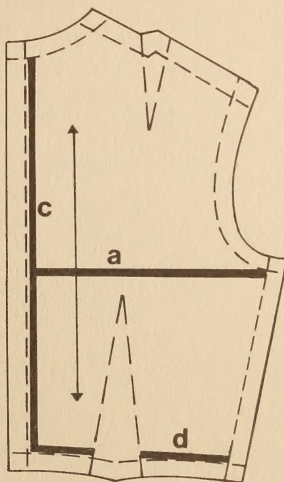
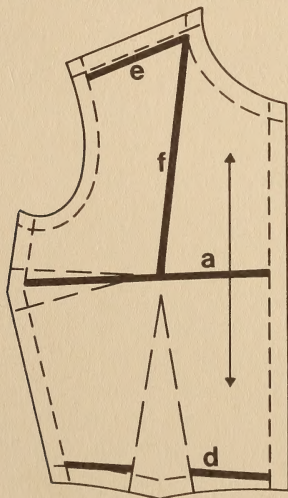
## FOR PERSONALIZED BODICE FITTING — MEASURE, COMPARE & ADJUST

### Measure:

Accurate **body measurements** are essential for personalized fitting. Secure a narrow belt or grosgrain ribbon around the waist to identify the normal waistline.

If possible, have a friend help to take your measurements. List them in the chart provided in the first (YOURS) column. Add an ease allowance to your body measurement to obtain TOTAL. Record.

When **measuring the pattern** to determine measurements (a) to (i), remember to measure from seamline to seamline. Record total circumference measurements, that is, multiply bust and waist measurements by two.



Ease has been included in the pattern.

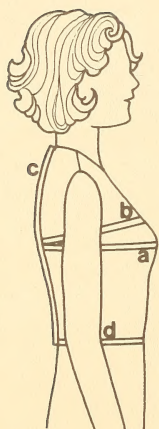
### Compare:

Compare pattern measurements to total body measurements (your measurements + ease). Indicate necessary pattern adjustments in the final column to individualize the pattern for a good fit.

**Alberta**  
AGRICULTURE

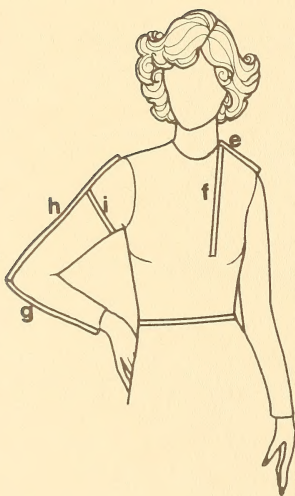
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## PERSONALIZED PATTERN ADJUSTMENT CHART

	Measurements				Adjustments
	Yours	Plus Ease	Total	Pattern	(+ or -)
a. <b>Bust</b> around fullest part		5 to 6.5 cm			
b. <b>High Bust</b> directly under arms, above bust		—	—	—	
c. <b>Back Length</b> from prominent bone at back neck to waist		1.5 cm			
d. <b>Waist</b>		1.5 to 2.5 cm			
e. <b>Shoulder Length</b> from base of neck to shoulder point					
f. <b>Bust Point Location</b> from shoulder at base of neck to bust point					
g. <b>Arm Length</b> from shoulder point to wrist bone over slightly bent elbow					
h. <b>Shoulder to Elbow Length</b> from shoulder point to middle of slightly bent elbow					
i. <b>Upper Arm</b> around fullest part of arm		5 cm			



### Adjust:

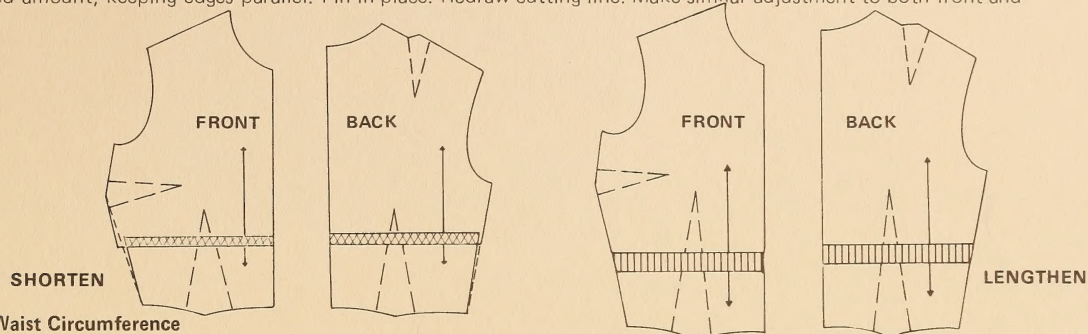
Make necessary pattern adjustments on a **working copy** (tissue copy) of the pattern, keeping the original pattern intact. Pattern adjustments should proceed in the following order as one adjustment may affect other measurements.

If the pattern has been purchased according to the bust or high bust measurement, usually no adjustment is necessary for width.

## 1 Bodice Length

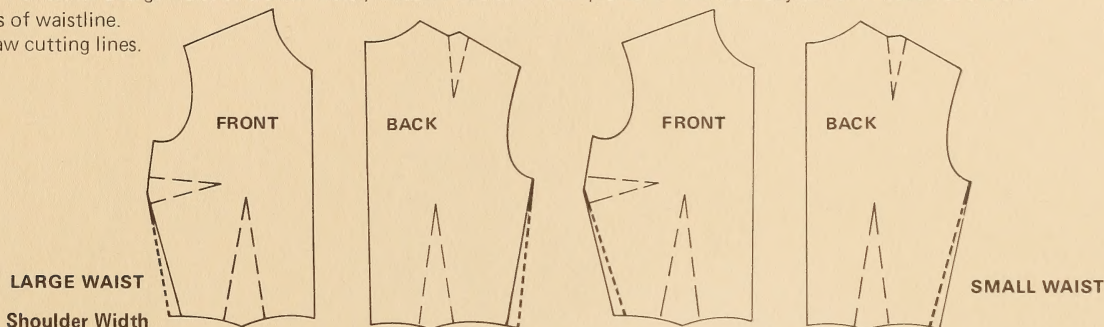
To **shorten** the bodice, draw a line parallel to the printed lengthen-shorten adjustment line — the distance between the two lines being the adjustment necessary. Fold pattern on adjustment line and superimpose on drawn line. Pin and redraw cutting line. Make similar adjustment to both front and back.

To **lengthen**, cut along printed lengthen-shorten adjustment line. Place paper under cut area. Separate pieces the required amount, keeping edges parallel. Pin in place. Redraw cutting line. Make similar adjustment to both front and back.



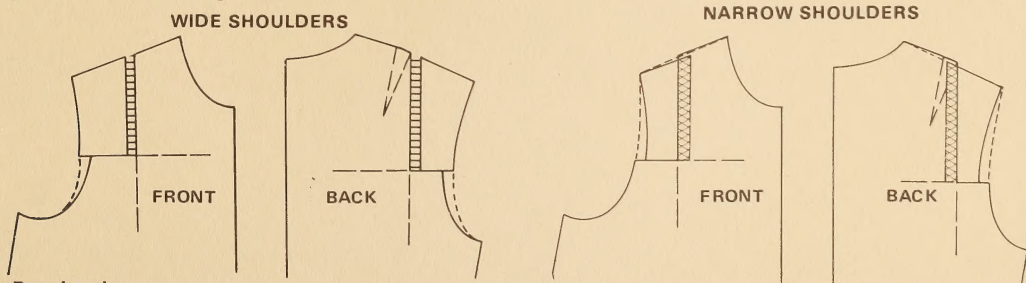
## 2. Waist Circumference

For either a large waist or a small waist, measure out or in one-quarter of the total adjustment needed at the side seams of waistline. Redraw cutting lines.



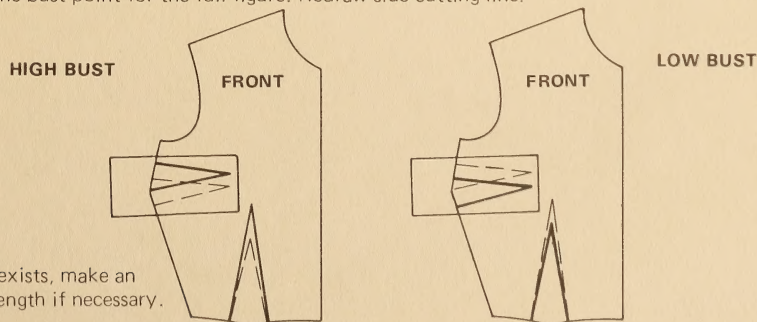
## 3. Shoulder Width

For either wide or narrow shoulder adjustments, draw two lines — one from the outer edge of the back dart position parallel to the grainline, the other from the middle of the armscye perpendicular to the first line. Cut along both lines to form a shoulder section. Move the section out or in the necessary amount on the horizontal line. Redraw armscye and shoulder cutting lines.



## 4. Bust Level

For either a high or a low bust, trace the bust dart onto a rectangle of tissue. Move the tissue up or down the necessary amount. Keep in mind that bust darts should terminate 2.5 cm from the bust point for the average figure, and 4 to 5 cm from the bust point for the full figure. Redraw side cutting line.



If a waist dart exists, make an adjustment in dart length if necessary.



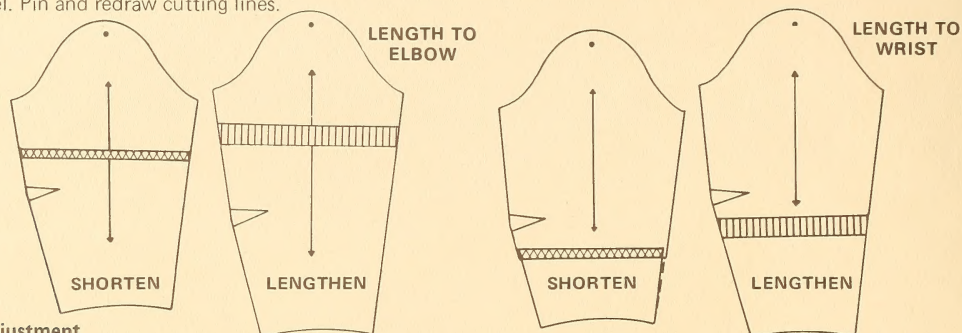
## 5. Sleeve Length

If sleeve is too short or too long from shoulder to elbow, use the upper adjustment line of the pattern.

If sleeve is too short or too long from shoulder to wrist, use the lower adjustment line of the pattern.

To **shorten**, draw a line parallel to the printed adjustment line the distance between the lines being the adjustment necessary. Fold pattern on adjustment line and superimpose on drawn line. Pin and redraw cutting lines.

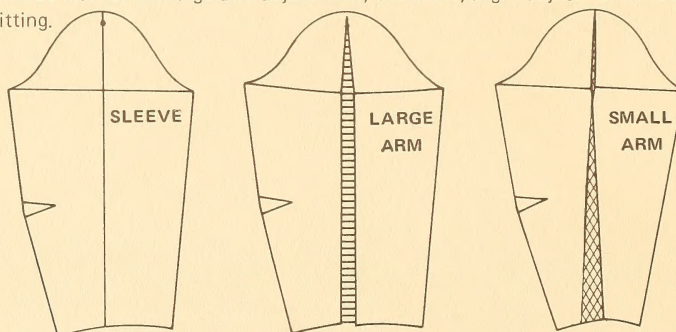
To **lengthen**, cut along printed adjustment line. Place paper under cut area. Separate pieces the required amount, keeping edges parallel. Pin and redraw cutting lines.



## 6. Arm Width Adjustment

For large or small arms, draw a lengthwise grainline from shoulder point to lower edge and crosswise grainline at the base of the sleeve cap. Slash pattern along lengthwise grainline from lower edge up to but not through upper edge at large dot. Slash along crosswise grainline up to but not through seam allowances on either side. Spread or overlap pattern the necessary amount.

Some sleeve cap length will be lost for the large arm adjustment, therefore, slight adjustment in sleeve cap length may be necessary in the first fitting.



The first stage of personalized bodice fitting has been completed. Taking body measurements, comparing them to pattern measurements and making adjustments on a working copy will individualize the pattern.

## PERSONALIZED FITTING BODICE SHELL

Further alterations can be made on a practice bodice or a gingham fitting shell cut according to the altered pattern. **Allow 2.5 cm seam allowance** at side seams, shoulder seams, waist, and centre front to provide extra fabric for final adjustment.

### Accuracy is Important

Transfer all markings to fabric. Indicate normal waistline with a row of stitching in contrasting color. Stay-stitch directionally, sew darts and side and shoulder seams. Leave seam opening in centre front. Set in both sleeves. At neckline, clip to staystitching and turn seam allowance under. Baste in position.

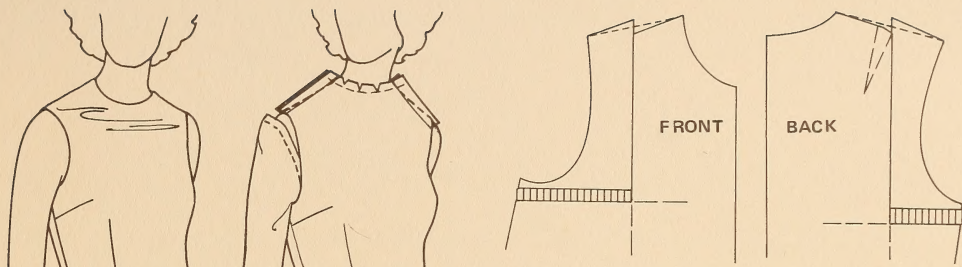
Try on shell and take a critical look in the mirror. The side seams should be perpendicular to the floor and the darts should point to the fullest part of the body. The bodice should fit smoothly over the bust without pulls or wrinkles. The neckline should not gape or bind.

Check the following problem areas:

### 1. Shoulder Height

- a. Square shoulders — strain lines appear across bodice top towards shoulder point.

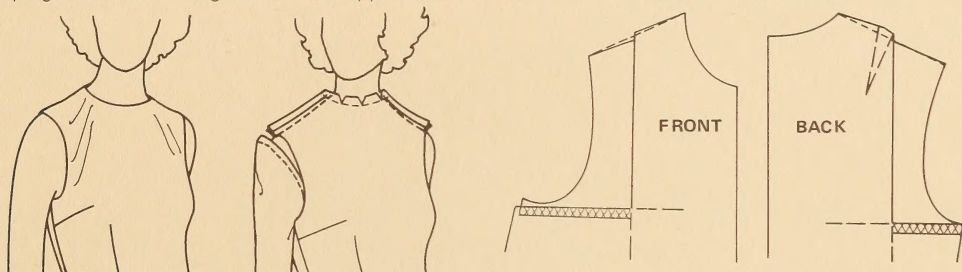




To correct, partially remove the sleeve cap. Open the shoulder seams up to the neckline. Note the amount of extra fabric released at the shoulder edge to create a smooth appearance.

On the working pattern, draw two lines — one from the outer edge of the shoulder dart position parallel to the grainline, the other under the armhole curve perpendicular to the first line. Cut along both lines to form an armhole section. Move the section up the amount determined from the fitting shell. Redraw shoulder and side cutting lines. Make adjustment to both front and back.

- b. Sloping shoulders — diagonal wrinkles appear from the neck to the armhole in front and back.

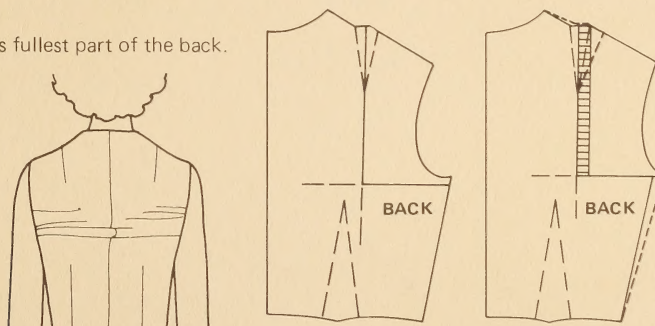


To correct, partially remove the sleeve cap. Pin out the excess fabric at the shoulder seams to create a smooth appearance.

On the working pattern, draw two lines — one from the outer edge of the shoulder dart parallel to the grainline, the other under the armhole curve perpendicular to the first line. Cut along both lines to form an armhole section. Move the section down the amount determined from the fitting shell. Redraw shoulder and side cutting lines. Make adjustment to both front and back.

## 2. Prominent Shoulder Blades

Bodice wrinkles and pulls across fullest part of the back.



To correct, release the back of the sleeve cap. Re-pin sleeve in seam allowance to determine amount of additional width required.

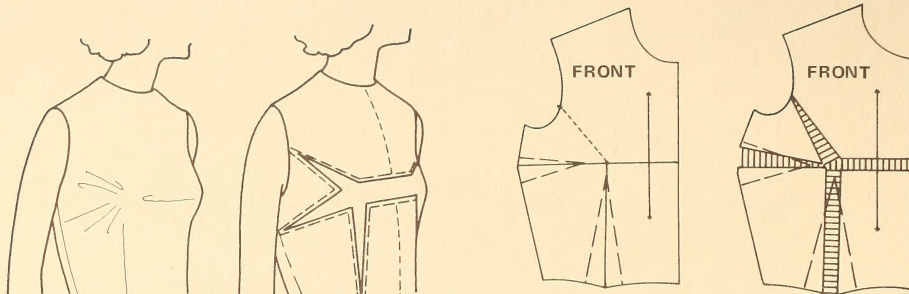
On the working pattern, draw two lines — one from the middle of the shoulder dart parallel to the grainline, the other under the armhole curve perpendicular to the first line. Cut along both lines. Move the armhole section out the amount determined from the fitting shell. Increase the size of the shoulder dart. If there is no shoulder dart, ease in back shoulder seam so front and back sections match.

## 3. Bust Size

- a. Large bust — bodice pulls over the bust, flattening the bust at the apex. Bodice may appear short waisted.

To correct for a small increase, open side seams. Deepen bust dart. Re-pin side seams in seam allowance to determine the amount of additional width required. Extra bodice length may be needed. Transfer adjustments to working pattern.





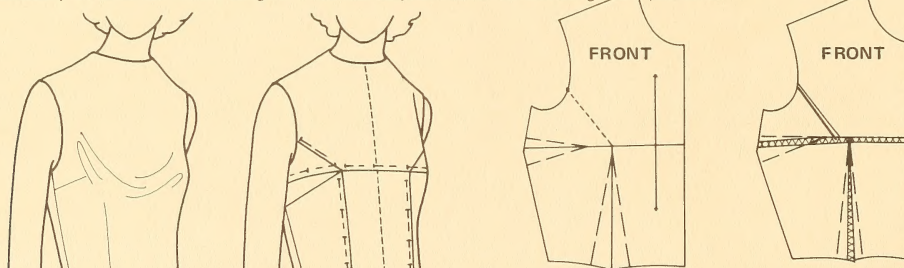
To correct for a large increase, make the following adjustment on a new working pattern.

Draw a line through the centre of horizontal and vertical darts. Where the lines intersect is the bust point. Draw a line from the bust point to the armhole notch and to centre front edge. Cut along these lines, up to but not through the armhole notch. Spread necessary amount, keeping grainline straight and lower edges even. Darts will become deeper. The extra length that has been added to centre front will be taken up in the side bust dart so that front and back side seams match.

Recut bodice front and reassemble shell for further fitting.

b. Small bust — bodice wrinkles over the point of the bust.

To correct for a small decrease, open side seams and reduce dart size. Re-pin side seams to take up extra width. It may be necessary to shorten front length. Transfer adjustments to working pattern.



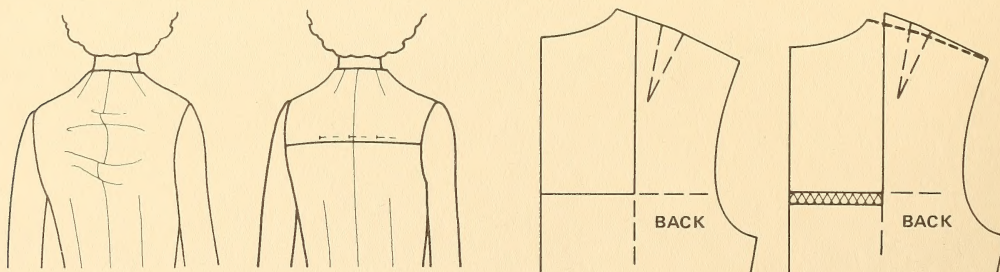
To correct for a large decrease, pin out excess fabric to fit body contour. Make the following adjustment on a new working pattern.

Draw a line through the centre of horizontal and vertical darts. Where the lines intersect is the bust point. Draw a line from the bust point to the armhole notch and to centre front edge. Cut along vertical and slanting line to armhole. Fold pattern along horizontal line and overlap slashed sections the amount necessary. Darts will be smaller. The length that has been removed at centre front will be the amount that the side bust dart is decreased so that front and back side seams match.

Recut bodice front and reassemble shell.

#### 4. Back Length Adjustments

a. Very erect back — horizontal wrinkles form below the neck in back.

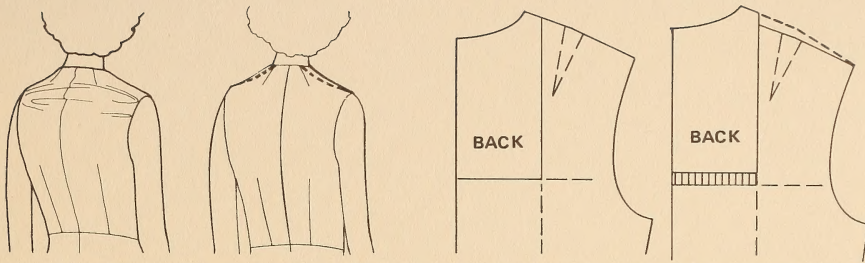


To correct, pin out the excess fabric, tapering to nothing at the armseye.

On the working pattern, draw two lines, one from the middle of the armseye curve to centre back, perpendicular to the grainline. The second line is approximately 5 cm from the neckline on the shoulder seam drawn at a right angle to the first line. Cut along both lines to form a back section. Move the section down the amount determined from the fitting shell. Redraw shoulder cutting line.

b. Dowager's hump (high, rounded back) — bodice pulls across the back and rides up at back waistline.



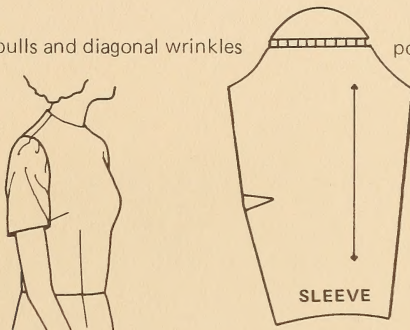


To correct, release shoulder seam at neck edge to determine additional length required for a smooth fit.

On the working pattern, draw two lines, one from the middle of the armseye curve to centre back perpendicular to the grainline. The second line is approximately 5 cm from the neckline on the shoulder seam drawn at a right angle to the first line. Cut along both lines to form a back section. Move section up the amount determined from the fitting shell. Redraw shoulder cutting line.

## 5. Sleeve Cap Length

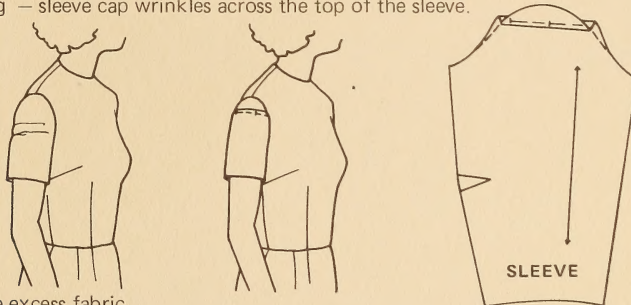
- a. Sleeve cap too short — sleeve cap pulls and diagonal wrinkles



To correct, release sleeve cap and determine extra length required to eliminate wrinkles.

On the working pattern, draw a line across the top of the sleeve cap perpendicular to the grainline. Cut along this line and spread pattern the amount determined from the fitting shell. Redraw cutting line. If adjustment is not too great, excess fabric may be eased into normal armseye.

- b. Sleeve cap too long — sleeve cap wrinkles across the top of the sleeve.

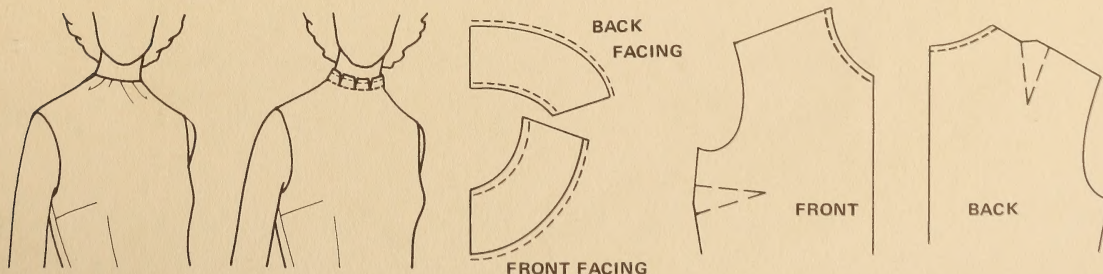


To correct, pin out the excess fabric.

On the working pattern, draw a line across the top of the sleeve cap perpendicular to the grainline. Draw a second line parallel to the first so that the distance between the two lines is the adjustment determined from the fitting shell. Fold pattern on lower line and superimpose on upper line. Pin and redraw cutting line. Sleeve cap ease will be reduced.

## 6. Neck Adjustments

- a. Tight neckline — neckline is too tight, feels tight and uncomfortable. Wrinkles form at base of neck.

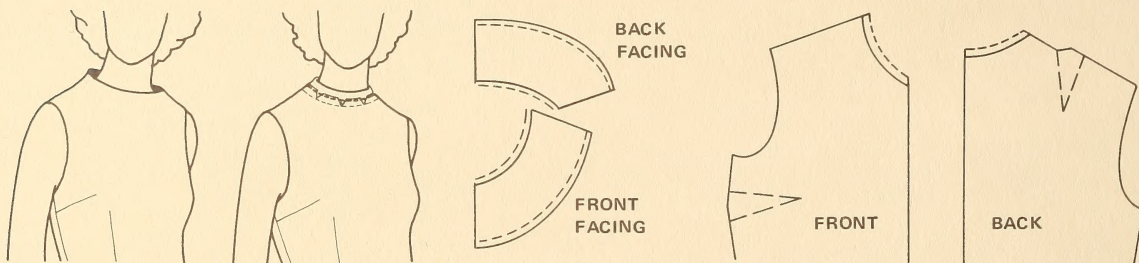




To correct, draw a line on the correct neckline location. Staystitch on this line. Clip to stitching so garment is smooth and comfortable.

Make adjustment on working pattern pieces. The neck facings must be adjusted in an identical manner.

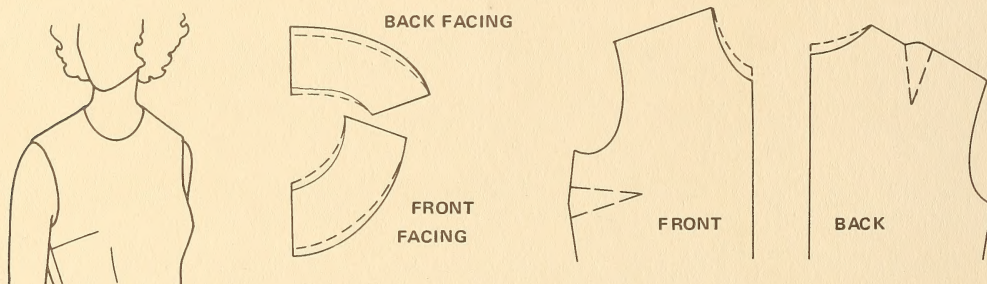
- b. Large neckline — neckline is too large and doesn't reach the base of the neck.



To correct, fill in neckline to the base of the neck with a folded bias strip of fabric.

On the working pattern, raise neckline on front and back where necessary. The neck facings must be adjusted in an identical manner.

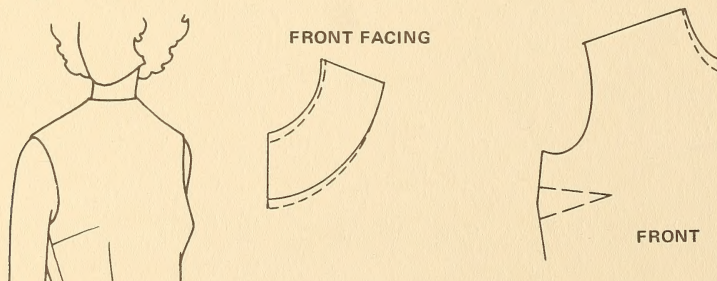
- c. Neckline is too low —



To correct, measure up the necessary amount at centre front and centre back only.

On the working pattern, redraw the neckline curve. Adjust facing in an identical manner.

- d. Neckline is too high at centre front —



To correct, measure down the necessary amount at centre front. Redraw the neckline curve. Staystitch on line, clip to stitching.

Make adjustment on the working pattern front. Front facing must be adjusted in an identical manner.

**A final bust level check.** If adjustments have been made at the neckline and shoulder, the bust dart position may have changed. If an adjustment is necessary, refer to No. 4 Bust Level for raising or lowering of darts.

When you have a basic pattern that fits well, transfer the pattern to heavy paper or pellon. Your personalized pattern can be superimposed on other patterns as a guide for alterations or used for pattern drafting and designing.